

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1339

As Passed House:
February 3, 2014

Title: An act relating to East Asian medicine practitioners.

Brief Description: Clarifying the scope of practice for East Asian medicine practitioners and removing certain referral requirements.

Sponsors: Representatives Tharinger, Angel, Cody, Harris, Jinkins, Green and Moscoso.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 2/7/13, 2/8/13 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/25/13, 92-0.

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/3/14, 95-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expands an East Asian medicine practitioner's scope of practice to include reflexology.
- Removes the requirement that an East Asian medicine practitioner develop a written plan of consultation, emergency transfer, and referral to other health care practitioners.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 16 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Riccelli, Vice Chair; Schmick, Ranking Minority Member; Harris, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hope, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Angel, Clibborn, Green, Jinkins, Manweller, Moeller, Morrell, Ross, Short, Tharinger and Van De Wege.

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

I. East Asian Medicine Practitioners.

East Asian medicine practitioners are licensed by the Department of Health (DOH). East Asian medicine is a health care service utilizing East Asian medicine diagnosis and treatment to promote health and treat organic or functional disorders. East Asian medicine includes: acupuncture; the use of electrical, mechanical, or magnetic devices to stimulate acupuncture points or meridians; moxibustion; acupressure; cupping; dermal friction technique; infra-red; sonopuncture; laserpuncture; aquapuncture; dietary advice and health education based on East Asian medical theory; breathing, relaxation, and East Asian exercise techniques; qi gong; East Asian massage and Tui na; and superficial heat and cold therapies.

A licensed East Asian medicine practitioner must develop a written plan for consultation, emergency transfer, and referral to other health care practitioners operating within their scopes of practice. The plan must be submitted to the DOH upon initial licensure and upon renewal. The DOH may withhold the license if the plan fails to meet standards established by the DOH.

II. Reflexology.

Generally, reflexology is a health care service involving the application of pressure with fingers to the lower one-third of the extremities, feet, hands, and outer ears. Beginning July 1, 2013, persons practicing reflexology must be certified by the DOH. In order to be certified, the person must be at least 18 years of age, have successfully completed a course of study in reflexology, and have passed an examination.

Summary of Bill:

"Reflexology" is added to the scope of practice of an East Asian medicine practitioner.

The requirement that an East Asian medicine practitioner develop a written plan for consultation, emergency transfer, and referral is eliminated.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill clarifies the scope of practice for East Asian medicine practitioners, by specifically mentioning reflexology, which is a practice that overlaps with what East Asian medicine practitioners already do. The bill also removes an outdated procedure that was put in place before East Asian medicine practitioners were allowed to practice independently. This bill will save East Asian medicine practitioners from confusion and extra work and will lower costs for the DOH.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Tharinger, prime sponsor; and Leslie Emerick and Curtis Eschels, Washington East Asian Medicine Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.